

## SCED speaks on Individual Visit Scheme

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Following is the transcript of remarks made by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Gregory So, to the media on the Individual Visit Scheme after attending the Lunar New Year Celebration of Radio Television Hong Kong today (February 24):

Reporter: (On the Individual Visit Scheme.)

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development: Thank you for your question. Your question is about the need to balance the economic development and also the capacity of Hong Kong to receive tourists, particularly in view of the multiple-visit scheme (the multiple-entry Individual Visit Endorsements) that is accorded to Shenzhen citizens. I really do not have much to add to what the Chief Executive had already said today. The balancing act is one that must be implemented very carefully. And as the Chief Executive had said this morning, this is not a policy of Hong Kong. It is a policy of the Mainland and therefore we must liaise with the relevant Mainland authorities in terms of how we could allow our tourists to have a very enjoyable experience in Hong Kong while not imposing too much burden on the daily livelihood of people in Hong Kong. It is not an easy balancing act. As the Chief Executive had said this morning, the policy has remained the same. But because of the latest development of more and more people coming under the existing policy, to tighten the policy in terms of allowing a lesser number of people to visit Hong Kong is something that we would look into and liaise with the relevant authorities in Mainland China.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

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